

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**SUPERVISORY OFFICER'S
QUALIFICATIONS PROGRAM**

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
GUIDELINE

JUNE 1990

RATIONALE

Before the consolidation of school boards was completed in 1969, ministry inspectors were responsible for ensuring that elementary and secondary school programs adhered to the ministry's policies and guidelines. After 1969, the supervision of publicly funded schools was turned over to school boards, which employed supervisory officers qualified to inspect the school systems' programs and staff on behalf of the Minister of Education. The current supervisory officer's examination began as the extension of the examinations previously written by candidates to become the ministry's elementary school inspectors. Today the supervisory officer is both a curriculum leader and ultimately a leader in the decision-making process of the local administration.

According to the Education Act, supervisory officers employed by school boards have two prime responsibilities: they are responsible to the Minister of Education for ensuring that ministry policies are carried out by school boards, and to school boards for carrying out the duties assigned to them.

Over the last two decades school boards have grown in complexity and diversity, placing an increasing burden of responsibility on supervisory officers. The demands of multiple stakeholders, performance objectives, rapid change, diminishing financial resources, and shifts in government priorities are but a few of the factors that impact upon the role of the supervisory officer.

Effective school board management, now and in the future, involves directing resources to critical areas, promoting the development of shared values and shared responsibility, effective communication (facilitating and networking), leadership styles that reflect strong personal convictions and a well founded vision of education within a rapidly changing social fabric.

To address the challenges of their positions, supervisory officers need to possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to function effectively and proactively in an increasingly complex environment. Their professional training must reflect these needs. It has become increasingly evident that the current certification process needs to be revised and that the preparation of supervisory officers for Ontario's educational system requires a well-balanced, coherent and comprehensive professional development program.

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual model for the new qualifications program illustrated on the following pages is designed to provide guidance to those responsible for developing a program that is consistent with the needs outlined in the rationale. It provides a framework around which the necessary components of the program can be organized in a co-ordinated and balanced way.

The construct begins with the premise that the individual learner is at the center of the learning process. In this case, the learner is a teacher or business official who aspires to the role of supervisory officer. He or she requires a specific range of skills and knowledge in order to be effective, and this range should proceed from awareness to application (see figure 1).

BASIC TRAINING MODEL

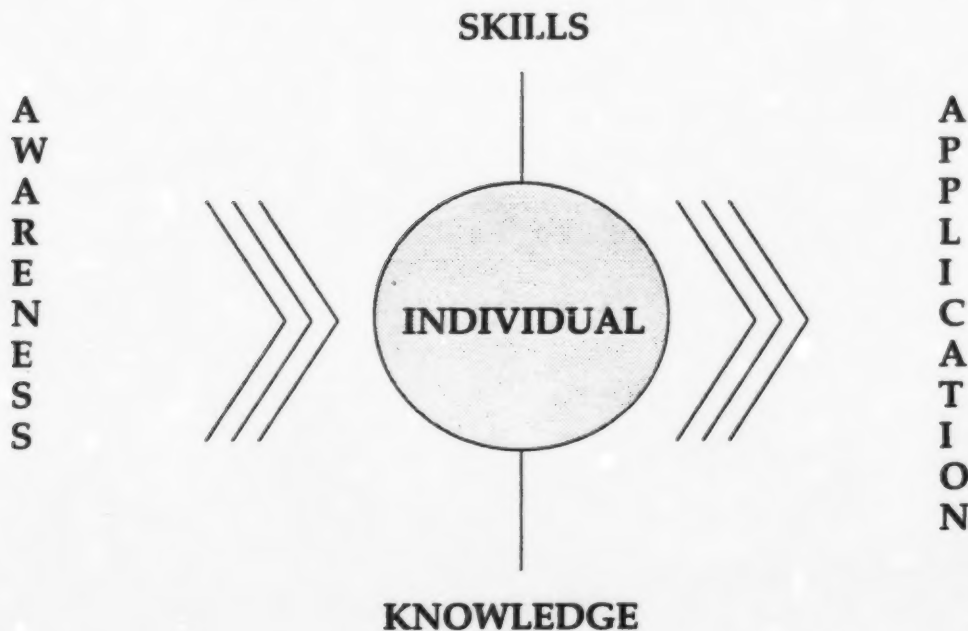


Figure 1

(Conceptual Framework - continued)

The skills side consists of the personal perspective and the practical dimension. The knowledge side of the model includes the system perspective and the theoretical foundation. These four broad areas are one model of the learning environment of the prospective supervisory officer (see figure 2).

The model could be considered as a career continuum model for all levels of development for teachers, consultants, co-ordinators, department heads, vice-principals, principals, business officials, and supervisory officers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

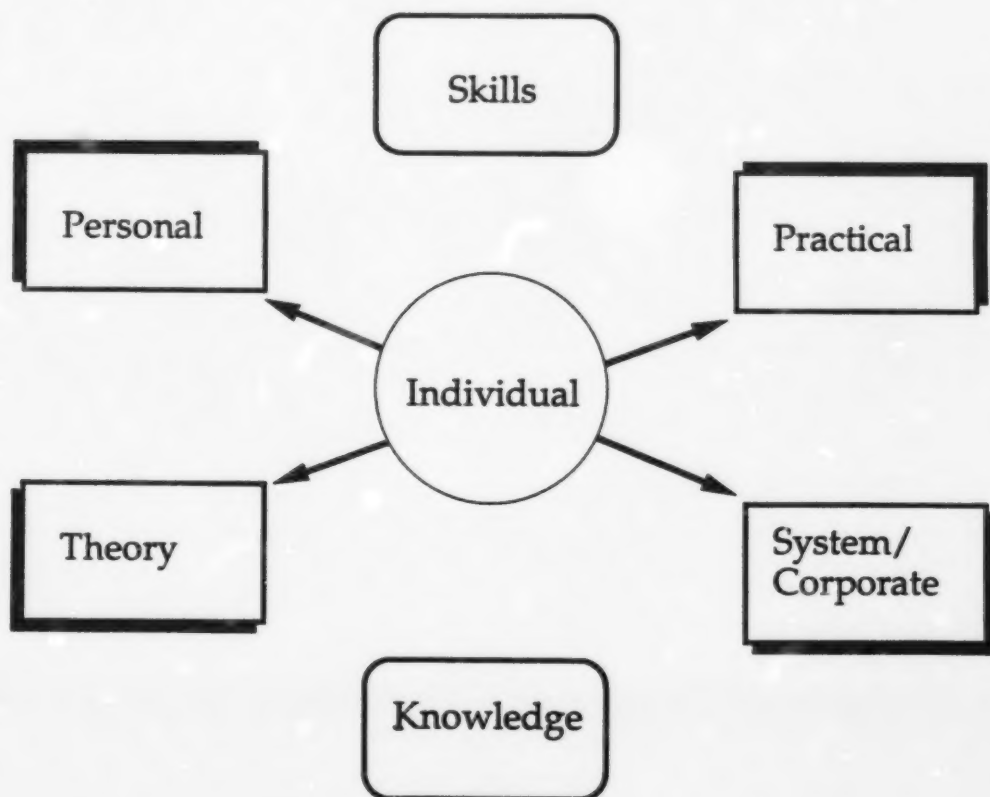


Figure 2

(Conceptual Framework - continued)

While there are probably many ways of organizing the knowledge and skills required of supervisory officers, this model is particularly useful because it can be used as a cornerstone in the preparation of courses. As well, the links among the four areas suggest interconnections that might be made in the design and delivery of various modules (see figure 3).

SUPERVISORY OFFICERS' QUALIFICATION PROGRAM

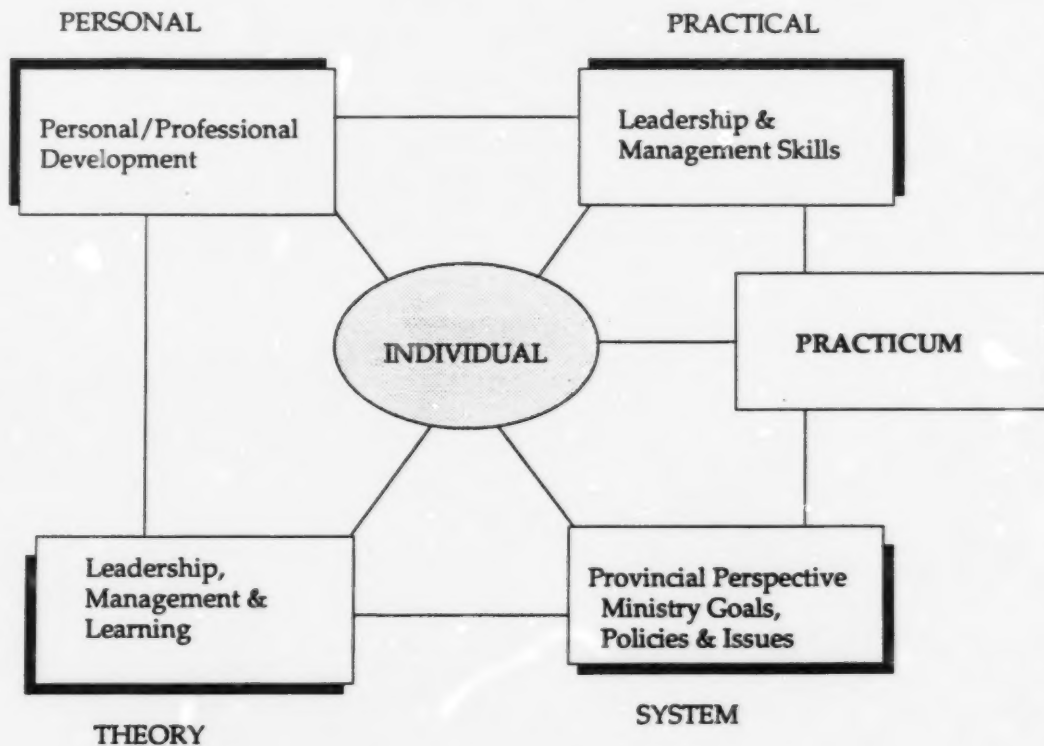


Figure 3

(The Conceptual Framework - continued)

The model assumes that all candidates for supervisory officer certification will have taken, by choice or by necessity as an admission requirement, other professional development within the same four spheres. Such professional development may include the principal's qualifications course, postgraduate degree or university courses, and other types of personal and professional growth courses (see figure 4).

Previous Professional Development

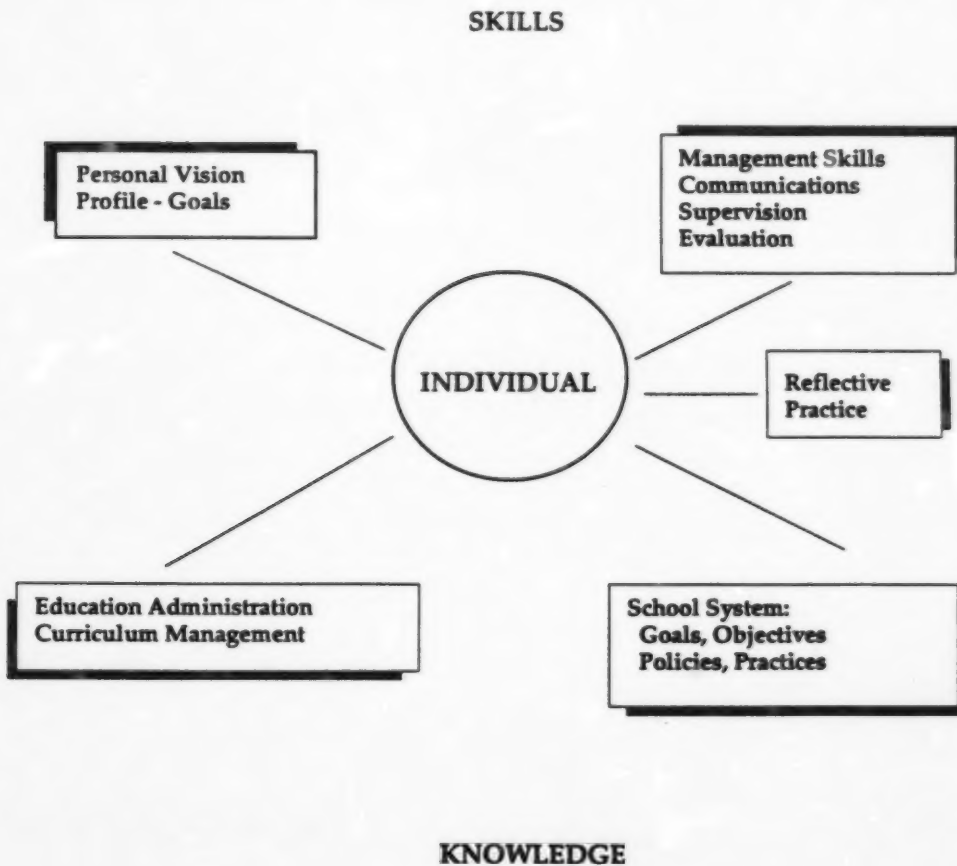


Figure 4

PROGRAM AREAS

1. Knowledge

In the SOQP model, the knowledge dimension is two-fold: the system perspective and the theoretical foundations. For supervisory officers, the system perspective includes the following:

- ministry goals and current priorities
- legislation, including regulations and policies
- current ministry initiatives (e.g., Speech from the Throne)
- financing of education
- curriculum policies and guidelines
- provincial issues and trends

Leadership in educational administration assumes an acquaintance with a theoretical base of knowledge which includes:

- organizational theory
- management theory
- leadership theory
- theories of learning
- change theory
- strategic planning
- labour relations
- human resource management

2. Skills

The skills dimension also encompasses two areas: personal and professional development, and integrative practice skills. In the first area, the focus is on self-knowledge and the continuing development of personal and professional skills. This area includes the following:

- the development of a personal and professional profile
- an assessment of the individual's leadership potential
- the development of a personal vision
- introspection and reflection
- career and life planning
- stress management

(Program Areas - continued)

Integrative practice skills provide the individual with the ability to function within a particular environment through the appropriate selection and integration of the knowledge and skills at his or her disposal. For the supervisory officer, these skills include the following:

- managing complexity
- proactive management
- reading the environment
- promoting creativity, learning and innovation
- networking
- developing contextual competencies

3. Reflective Practice/Practicum

A practicum is an essential component of professional development. It involves experiential learning where the individual is engaged in a realistic, supervised activity. For the supervisory officer candidate this practicum should:

- reflect the day-to-day realities of system-level educational administration;
- require the integration of knowledge and personal skills (e.g., facilitating, networking);
- involve the guidance of a mentor;
- extend problem-solving skills and abilities to deal with critical incidents;
- require feedback mechanisms including oral and written reflections on the practicum experience;
- provide a means of evaluating the individual's professional achievement.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The four areas identified in the SOQP model encompass the essential components of a preparatory program for academic and business supervisory officer certification. The design and sequence of the modules must reflect a balance between knowledge-based and skills-based professional development. While the individual modules may focus on a particular knowledge or skills area, the instructional design of each module must provide for the integration of both dimensions. For instance, a module which focuses on the provincial perspective may require candidates to demonstrate their leadership skills in a situation involving resistance to change in the implementation of an initiative. It is not anticipated that the personal perspective would be the subject of a single separate module. Elements drawing upon these ideas, however, could be integrated into modules.

A. AIMS

The following aims indicate the intent of the SOQP Program. The program shall provide opportunities for the candidates to:

1. increase their understanding of themselves as a key component of the change process in educational administration.
2. increase their awareness of the various theoretical foundations of educational administration including the interrelationships between the theories of learning and organizational theory.
3. enhance their understanding of the education system in Ontario (e.g., the structure, policies, and priorities of the Ministry of Education, the legislative process and the relationships among the various stakeholders in education).
4. increase their ability to integrate personal skills with theory-based knowledge in educational administration.
5. deal experientially with a given dimension of leadership in educational administration through a supervised practicum.
6. obtain feedback on their level of achievement of the goals and objectives of each module and practicum (formative) and their success in meeting the overall objectives of the program (summative).

B. PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. THE PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

1.1 Personal Profile Inventory

To understand one's strengths and weaknesses and determine further personal growth opportunities, it is essential that each supervisory officer candidate develop a personal profile which might include some of the following:

- techniques of introspection
- personality type (e.g., Myers-Briggs)
- strengths and weaknesses
- preferred learning styles
- preferred communication styles
- self-perception (esteem, self-worth)
- life-long goals
- personal values

1.2 Professional Profile Inventory

To better focus one's vision of education and its implications for the supervisory officer's role on the process of change, and to establish one's future professional directions through analysis of future trends and sound career planning, candidates need to develop a professional profile which might include the following:

- a leadership potential profile
- their role as an agent of change
- career planning
- their view of education
- environmental scanning

1.3 Performance Enhancement

To achieve a balance between their personal needs and professional responsibilities, candidates will benefit from opportunities to enhance their skills in the following areas:

- a) Political skills
 - negotiating
 - networking
 - lobbying
 - empowering others
 - stakeholder accountability

(Program Components - continued)

- b) Technical skills
 - time management
 - presentation skills
 - current technology updates

- c) Thinking skills
 - problem-solving and decision-making
 - visioning
 - critical thinking

- d) Stress Management
 - career-life equilibrium
 - health and fitness requirements
 - self-organization skills
 - meditation techniques

2. MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP THEORY

The purpose of this area is to provide supervisory officer candidates with opportunities to enhance their knowledge of research and theory in management and leadership in education.

To perform effectively in their roles, supervisory officers require a theoretical base of knowledge with respect to the following:

- a vision of the learner and an understanding of the learning process
- educational organization, management, leadership, and strategic planning
- human resource management, including staff supervision and evaluation and labour-employee relations
- curriculum management
- current research on issues such as effective schools and excellence
- effective communications and public relations

(Program Components - continued)

3. THE PROVINCIAL PERSPECTIVE

The purpose of this area is to provide opportunities for supervisory officer candidates to expand their knowledge of provincial and school board educational systems with regard to structure, legislation, policy development, finance and related issues.

To perform effectively in their roles, supervisory officers must have an extensive understanding of the following:

- the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education and the roles and responsibilities of its various branches
- the philosophy, goals of education and the strategic directions of the Ministry of Education
- the responsibilities and roles of the Ministry of Education, school boards and stakeholders (e.g., other ministries, professional associations and community groups)
- the policy development process at the provincial government and school board levels
- relevant provincial and federal legislation such as acts, regulations, and policies
- legislation pertaining to educational finance (Section 8 of the Education Act, the General Legislative Grants Regulations, and related legislation)
- current and proposed legislation that may impact on the funding of education in Ontario (e.g., pooling, lot levies)
- issues that have an impact on educational finance, (e.g. child care, pay equity, teacher pensions)
- the effect of government policies, programs, and initiatives on school board management
- social and political issues that impact on education (e.g., equity, governance, pluralism)

(Program Components - continued)

4. INTEGRATED PRACTICE

The concepts identified in this area reflect the skills that supervisory officer candidates should develop in order to perform effectively in their roles as leaders in education.

These skills include:

- visioning
- motivating and empowering staff
- managing and leading in complex arenas
- promoting creativity, learning, and innovation

CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Education has decided that in the future all individuals wishing to become certified as supervisory officers will be required to complete an appropriate preparatory programme. The framework described in this document is intended as a guide for the development of such a programme whether delivered face to face or in a distance education mode.

To allow for the broadest possible involvement in the design, development and delivery of the program, the Ministry is inviting proposals from professional educators across the province who may be interested in becoming delivery agents. These programs are expected to be congruent with the framework set forth in this document and shall be evaluated on the basis of such criteria as quality, rigor, relevance, equality of access and creativity.

The current examination process will be phased out as the program is implemented across the province.